DMZ #29

"BLOOD IN THE GAME" part 1 of 6

Page 1

Panel 1

We're opening this story with a scene set in total chaos, and we don't know exactly what's going on just yet. At first just show a crowd of mostly brown and black people, all pushing forward in one direction like crowds do at rock concerts. Some people look happy, some a little stressed and some frantic. Everyone is yelling. Moments before a riot breaks out.

We're going to introduce credits gradually over this scene:

WRITTEN BY BRIAN WOOD

Panel 2

Show the same thing but switch angles and pull back a little to get more crowd in. In panel 1 we saw maybe 10-15 people, and in panel 2 here we see maybe 40-50 people.

In the air and in the distance are military helicopters hanging around, watching.

ART BY RICCARDO BURCHIELLI

Panel 3

Pull way, way back and angle from the air looking down from the height of the helicopters. It's a LOT of people, this crowd is much larger that it seemed. Everyone is all pushing in one direction ONLY. Whatever it is they're trying to reach is still off-panel.

A few people are holding signs, like you see at protests and political rallies. Only show a few, and have them read: DELGADO NATION and just DELGADO.

This is the largest panel on the page, taking up the bottom half.

COLORED BY JEROMY COX

LETTERED BY JARED K. FLETCHER

A speech balloon, a radio transmission.

VOICE: UH, BASE... THIS IS TALON FOUR. WE HAVE--- WAIT, STAND BY ONE---

VOICE: **BASE, BASE...** WE HAVE **SHOTS FIRED**, CONFIRM, **SHOTS FIRED...**

Page 2-3

This is a double page spread, Riccardo, the panels should all be wide enough to cross both pages.

Panel 1

This is a long pnale but not very tall, just the heads of the dense crowd as they start to panic. Everyone's looking in all directions now, some are covering their heads, others are pushing and shoving.

sfx: KRA-KOW! KRAK-KOW!

VOICE: ROGER, TALON FOUR. GROUND UNITS CONFIRM SHOTS FIRED.

VOICE: TALON FLIGHT, MOVE INTO OBSERVATION PATTERN VIKTOR-MIKE. FIND US THAT SHOOTER, COPY...

COVER ILLUSTRATION BY BRIAN WOOD

Panel 2

This next panel is taller than the first, and just as wide. Down on street level, the crowd is beginning to disperse and split up. People are pushing and running and screaming and climbing over each other. We can see some of the ground here, as the crowd makes way. No one is shot.

VOICE: BASE – THE NATIVES ARE GETTING RESTLESS DOWN HERE...

VOICE: YOU WANT A SHOOTER, TAKE YOUR **PICK**. HALF THE CROWD'S ABOUT TO BRING THE NOIZE.

ASSISTANT EDITED BY CASEY SEIJAS

Panel 3

A few black and Latino men, dressed in baggy shorts and red t-shirts, all looking the same like some kind of private security, are yelling and roughly pushing through the crowd. They have enormous assault rifles that are pointed up as they push through. They look pissed off and a little panicked.

VOICE: COPY, FOUR. ALL GROUND UNITS, PULL BACK TO SAFE POSITIONS AT YOUR DISCRETION.

VOICE: TALON, DO WE AT LEAST HAVE A **BODY**, HERE? DID THE SHOTS FIND A TARGET?

EDITED BY WILL DENNIS

Panel 4

Get Matty large in this last wide panel, and keep him on the right hand side. We're seeing him from the back, and he's turning over his shoulder to look in our direction. We can see part of the PRESS on his back, and he's yelling and angry just like the others.

In the background we see more crowd, more of those red shirted security, some of which are standing close to Matty.

MATTY: **PARCO'S DOWN! DOWN!**

VOICE: UH, ROGER BASE. TAKE **ONE GUESS.**

Page 4-5

Panel 1

Another double page spread, this one just one entire image. Matty is standing on the right hand side, pointing a finger at us, angrily. He's screaming at us. On the left hand side show Parco Delgado, alive but with two bullet hits towards one side of his chest and closer to his shoulder. There's a lot of blood. Four or five of those red-shirt security guys are helping him, holding him, as he lies slumped on the street. In the background the crowd is still freaking out.

Important: Matty is carrying an assault rifle, just like the other guys, and its slung over his shoulders and he has his other hand on the grip. This is the first time we've seen him with a gun, first time he's taken sides, acted like a guard or an insurgent, so make sure you get a good view of it.

MATTY: GET THAT **FUCKING CAMERA OUT OF HERE!!**

Big credits:
BLOOD IN THE GAME 1 of 6:
"Being The Hunted One Is No Fun"

DMZ created by Wood & Burchielli

Page 6

Panel 1 & 2

These panels are the same size as each other, side by side, and together they stretch across the page. The first panel is pure black.

Location cap:
WEEKS BEFORE.

The second panel shows a couple fingers, Matty's, opening up some slats in a Venetian blind. Through it we can see a perfect view of Manhattan, the Empire State Building in view. Bright sunny day, no smoke, no fighting.

VOICE, off: YOU DON'T NEED TO KEEP THIS APARTMENT, YOU KNOW. YOU CAN COME LIVE WITH ME.

VOICE, off: WHAT? WHY? I **LIKE** IT HERE.

Panel 3

Turn around and show Zee standing in Matty's bedroom in his Chinatown apartment. She's getting dressed, pulling on jeans.

ZEE: I **KNOW** YOU DO. BUT YOU LIKE IT FOR ALL THE WRONG REASONS.

ZEE: YOU LIKE IT BECAUSE A **BIG BAD GANGSTER'S** LETTING YOU STAY IN IT. IT'S A STATUS THING FOR YOU... YOU'RE GETTING **COOL POINTS**.

Panel 4

Show Matty standing by the window, shirtless, looking back at her with a smirk.

MATTY: SO WHAT IF I DO?

MATTY: DON'T I ALSO GET "**COOL POINTS**" FOR DATING **YOU**?

Panel 5

She walks up behind him and puts her arms around him, hands on his chest. They're both facing the same direction – out the window.

ZEE: MMM, THAT'S QUITE TRUE. BUT IT'S DIFFERENT.

ZEE: YOU **EARN THOSE** COOL POINTS.

Panel 6

Move outside the building and point back in through the window at Matty and Zee, looking out at us. Pull back enough that we see a lot of the building, and even possibly other buildings around it.

A news broadcast starts up:

"... as polling booths in seven states across the country open their doors for the presidential primaries, attention in the region remains focused almost solely on events in the "DMZ", specifically the ongoing **normalization talks**, entering their eleventh straight day today..."

Page 7

Panel 1

Large panel looking down at a four-cornered intersection, as if from a rooftop. It's one of our classic empty intersection littered with debris and trash and a burned out car. Matty is bent over and running diagonally across, his PRESS shirt clearly visible.

News:
"...as both sides of the conflict work to hammer out a lasting ceasefire. With conditions on the ground improving every day and the rest of the country moving forward with the first election since the war began, the delegates have every reason to push for the best possible outcome."

Matty's narration:
THE NORMALIZATION TALKS WERE THE FUCKING **SCOURGE** OF LOWER MANHATTAN. DON'T BELIEVE THE HYPE – ANY SIGNS OF IMPROVEMENT ON THE GROUND ARE COMPLETELY MANUFACTURED.

IT'S OLD-FASHIONED "SURGE" TACTICS. SWARM A DOZEN SQUARE BLOCKS WITH TROOPS AND AIR COVER AND IT'S SUDDENLY THE SAFEST PLACE IN THE WORLD.

Panel 2

He's pressed up into a doorway, trying to hide in the shadow, as a yellow taxi vrooms by. This is a modified war wagon, the roof of the car cut off and the windows removed, a fifty-caliber gun mounted in the backseat. If you've seen Black Hawk Down, Riccardo, its like those pickup trucks the insurgents drive with the gun in the back.

Matty:
THE **NEXT** DOZEN BLOCKS...

...NOT SO MUCH.

Panel 3

Small panel, up close on the pocket of Matty's jeans. We can see part of a cellphone sticking out.

sfx: DEEDLE DEEDLE DEE! DEEDLE DEEDLE DEE!

MATTY, off: shit!

Panel 4

Matty runs along the sidewalk, still bent over, right against the edge of the building. He's answering his cell.

MATTY: YES? WHAT?

Panel 5

Up close on Matty's astonished face.

MATTY: ...

MATTY: **LIBERTY NEWS?**

News:
"At the tables today are the representatives from the United States, as well as the so-called Free States, and will be joined by Trustwell executives, the United Nations peace broker, and leaders from several of the larger paramilitary groups that have sprung up in the city since the war began..."

Page 8

Panel 1

Medium panel of a Blackhawk helicopter flying low over the rooftops, downtown-style buildings with watertowers and exposed fire escapes.

News:
"...some question the inclusion of these leaders in the talks, but inside sources seem to indicate their presence is purely honorary – a lasting peace solution will not include them as equal partners, or any sort of partner at all. They are expected to lay down arms and assimilate back into the civilian population."

Panel 2

On the ground, 7 or 8 US military Humvees have parked a loose circle in the middle of a wide street. Troops are standing guard and in the middle of it is Matty standing with a guy in a suit – no tie. He'll be known as HANDLER in the script.

News:
"But for now, their strategic situation has earned them a minor place in the process, as they all gather to seek a way to end this war, once and for all."

Panel 3

Matty's peering at a few pages of paper stapled together while the sweaty man hovers close by.

HANDLER: ALL VERY STANDARD LANGUAGE, MR. ROTH...

MATTY: ARE YOU **SERIOUS**? THE **LAST** CONTRACT I SIGNED FROM YOU GUYS, I ENDED UP OWING YOU FOR SHOT-UP EQUIPMENT.

MATTY: SO HOLD ON, LET ME **READ** THE FUCKING THING, OK?

Panel 4

Pull back and show Matty signing the contract, using the man's back to hold the papers. A nearby solider has his mouth open in laughter.

Matty's narration:
I SIGNED THEIR CONTRACT, YEAH. MAKES ME A HYPOCRITE, I KNOW.

IT ALSO GETS ME FULL PRESS ACCESS TO THE NORMALIZATION TALKS AND CONFERENCES AFTERWARDS. I WAS HEADING UP THERE ANYWAY, SO AT LEAST NOW I CAN BE A **PLAYER** AND NOT SOME LOSER BEHIND A SECURITY CORDON.

Panel 5

The soldiers stand guard as Matty and the sweaty guy get into the back of the biggest, nicest, cleanest Humvee there.

Matty's narration:
AND WHAT DO THEY GET?

Panel 6

Matty looking out the window. Small panel.

Matty's narration:
MY SOUL, OF COURSE.

Page 9

Panel 1

Large panel, almost the whole page, showing the famous Cooper Union building. Riccardo, I have reference: xxx (use the angle and composition of the "black_white" image. The others are there to help with detail)

The building is surrounded by military vehicles, barricades, UN soldiers, tv broadcast trucks with satellite dishes, and people.

Location caption:
COOPER UNION
THE EAST VILLAGE

Location caption:
THE NORMALIZATION TALKS

Matty:
THE USUAL SUSPECTS.

THE UN TROOPS – THAI AND BANGLADESHI, I HEAR. THE FIRST DEPLOYMENT OF BLUE HELMETS IN THE DMZ SINCE THE TRUSTWELL BOMBING.

NICE TO SEE THE WORLD HASN'T FORGOTTEN ABOUT US.

Panel 2

Wide panel of Matty getting out of the Humvee, looking up as he does. His hat casts most of his face in shadow. Around him we can see troops and razor wire.

Matty:
THE FREE STATES ARE HERE. THIS HAS GOT TO BE AS FAR EAST IN THE CITY AS THEY'VE EVER BEEN. OFFICIALLY, ANYWAY.

IT'S UNCHARACTERISTIC OF THE U.S. TO INVITE THEM, TO TREAT THEM AS EQUALS. ARE PRAGMATIC HEADS FINALLY PREVAILING?

ARE EXPECTATIONS BEING LOWERED?

Page 10

Panel 1

We shift angles and focus on the crowd milling around behind the security barricades, which is a 12-foot chainlink fence, like the one that Matty climbs over in Friendly Fire, I think at the end of #21? The crowd looking like a slightly angry group of protestors, but there are no signs or banners, just people shouting and yelling and a few with fists in the air. Pull back far enough that we see at lot of people.

Matty's narration:
THE CROWD. THRILLED TO HAVE BEEN LIVING UNDER A SECURITY SURGE THESE PAST WEEKS, IN ADVANCE OF THE TALKS.

"NORMALIZATION" MY ASS.

Panel 2

Back to Matty, who speaks sideways to one of the U.S. troops who came in with him in the Humvees. Both are scanning the crowd, not looking at each other.

MATTY: WHERE'D YOU PUT THEM ALL THIS TIME?

SOLDIER: WHAT?

Panel 3

Similar panel to previous.

MATTY: I'VE LIVED HERE FOR OVER **TWO YEARS**. I START TO RECOGNIZE PEOPLE, WHO'S HERE AND WHO ISN'T. MUST HAVE BEEN **QUITE** A SECURITY SWEEP. WHERE'D YOU PUT THEM ALL?

SOLDIER: SCREW YOU, ROTH.

SOLDIER: YOU THINK WE'RE SOME **GESTAPO**, BUT MOST OF THE TIME WE'RE JUST BARELY HOLDING ON. NO ONE KNOWS WHAT THE FUCK'S GOING TO HAPPEN FROM ONE MINUTE TO THE NEXT.

Panel 4

Similar panel to panel 1 – more of the restless crowd behind the barricade.

SOLDIER, off: WE BOTH GET OUT OF HERE TODAY ALIVE, YOU SHOULD BE **THANKING** ME.

SOLDIER, off: FUCKING "NORMALIZATION"... WHAT'S **NORMAL** ABOUT THIS CITY?

Page 11

Panel 1

Small Panel showing the Cooper Union building from a new angle.

Loc cap:
LATER.

Panel 2

Inside a large room packed with other journalists. They're leaning against walls, smoking, drinking coffee from paper cups, talking, swearing, laughing, bitching... all killing time waiting for something to happen. These aren't necessarily cool field journalists, but rather mostly guys in suits or scruffy "new media" types.

Riccardo, think of the room in Lucca where we spoke about DMZ on stage. This is what this room should look like, and Matty is sitting in the audience with the rest of them.

In the back of the room, against the back wall stand many other people, residents of the city, militia (no guns), and others who have scored in an invite. Riccardo, put Parco Delgado in there with a couple of his followers – they will be wearing RED shirts.

Matty:
THE PRESS POOL. HERDED INTO A ROOM AND TOLD FIVE MINUTES TO THE PRESS CONFERENCE. TWO HOURS LATER WE'RE STILL WAITING.

I PULLED THE LATEST ELECTION NEWS FROM THE LIBERTY SERVERS AND CAUGHT UP. YEP, IT'S A REAL ELECTION, OR AT LEAST IT'S TRYING TO BE.

Panel 3

Move in closer on Matty as he reads off a few sheets of paper balanced on his knee.

THE REMARKABLE THING, AS FUCKED UP AND FRACTURED AS THIS COUNTRY IS, IT'S STILL COALESCING AROUND TWO MAJOR PARTIES. OLD HABITS DIE HARD, MAYBE...

OR THERE'S A COMFORT IN THE FAMILIAR, SINCE EACH CANDIDATE SEEMS TO HAVE THE SAME IDEA ON HOW TO END THE WAR.

Panel 4

Pull back a bit and show Matty and a few others around him looking up as an announcement is made.

Matty:
MEANING THAT NO ONE HAS ANY IDEAS AT ALL.

VOICE, off: ATTENTION EVERYONE, PLEASE!

Panel 5

Show the stage. A line of military officials in uniform (USA and FSA, and Trsutwell) and guys in suits are filing onto the stage. A young, pretty military officer is the one speaking, standing at the edge of the stage. I want to stress that everyone on stage should be WHITE.

WOMAN: WE'RE READY TO BEGIN.

WOMAN: THE DELEGATES WILL MAKE BRIEF STATEMENTS, AND WILL TAKE LIMITED QUESTIONS FROM THE **PRESS ONLY**.

Page 12

Panel 1

The United States delegate gets up, a proper-looking gray haired man. We'll call him "USA". He is clearly wearing a full dress uniform with the American flag patch visible to us.

USA: I'D LIKE TO THANK YOU ALL FOR COMING. THESE PAST DAYS HAVE NOT BEEN EASY ON ANY OF US, AND WITH THAT IN MIND I'LL JUST GET TO THE POINT.

USA: WE'D LIKE TO ANNOUNCE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A **FOUR-WEEK INTERIM CEASEFIRE**, STARTING AT MIDNIGHT TONIGHT, AFFECTING ALL AREAS OF THE CITY...

Panel 2

Reverse around and show a half-dozen reporters, some holding out iPod-style recorders, others writing notes by hand. Matty is one of them.

USA, off: ...AND **ALL** COMBAT FORCES, BOTH CONVENTIONAL AND INSURGENT, MILITIA AND CONTRACTOR.

USA, off: NEGOTIATIONS WILL CONTINUE, OF COURSE. THESE FOUR WEEKS ARE MEANT TO PREOVIDE THE BREATHING ROOM TO HAMMER OUT A MORE **LASTING** AGREEMENT...

Panel 3

Back to the delegates. Angle from the side, to show several of them in a line. The delegate from the Free States in there as well, dressed in their uniform, clean and pressed but without the same level of ornamentation, medals, patches, etc.

USA: ...AND TO ALLOW THE CITY OF MANHATTAN TO PARTICIPATE ALONG WITH THE REST OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK IN THE PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARIES.

FSA: I WOULD LIKE TO ADD TO THAT, ON BEHALF OF **THE FREE STATES OF AMERICA**, THAT WE FEEL THE INCLUDING OF **ALL AMERICANS** IN THIS DEMOCRATIC PROCESS TO BE **CRUCIAL**...

Panel 4

Focus just on the FSA officer.

FSA: ...AND FOR THAT PROCESS TO BE **TRANSPARENT** AND **FAIR**. A LOT OF AMERICAN LIVES HAS BEEN LOST AND TREASURE SPENT IN THE RECENT PAST SECURING THESE **BASIC RIGHTS** IN OTHER COUNTRIES.

FSA: THE FREE STATES MAINTAIN AN EXPECTATION OF THE SAME HERE AT HOME. WE'RE **COMMITTED** TO IT...

Panel 5

Small panel as he leans forward and puts his lips right up to the microphone and speaks with great emphasis.

FSA: ...**UTTERLY**...

Panel 6

Last panel, as the FSA, looking to the side at the other men on stage.

FSA: ...AS WE **ALL** ARE.

Page 13

Panel 1

Show the crowd, the journalists in their seats and the people in the back, from the POV of someone on stage. The representative of Trustwell speaks next.

TRUST, off: ON BEHALF OF THE TRUSTWELL CORPORATION, I WOULD LIKE TO STATE RIGHT NOW OUR COMMITMENT AND SUPPORT FOR THE **PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES**, AND A SUCCESSFUL REELECTION CAMPAIGN.

From the crowd, we see the guy next to Matty lean towards him and whisper.

GUY: big fucking surprise...

Panel 2

On stage, one of the insurgent leaders speaks. He's the member of the Nation of Fearghus, who we saw in a scene in DMZ #20. He's dressed in a suit coat over a t-shirt, no uniform.

NATION: AND THE **NATION OF FEARGHUS** SUPPORTS THE CANDIDATE FOR THE **FREE STATES** OF **AMERICA**!

Panel 3

Another leader, this one a Hell's Angel-style biker with blond hair, speaks up into the microphone, but he has his head turned to look down the line at the USA rep.

BIKER: THE U.S.W. SUPPORTS AMERICA!

BIKER: THE **REAL** AMERICA!

VOICE, off: HOW DO **YOU** KNOW WHAT IS REAL??

Panel 4

Matty, along with everyone around him, turns around in his chair to see who from the back of the room is speaking.

VOICE, off: HOW CAN YOU SPEAK FOR **SO MANY PEOPLE**...

MATTY: ?

Panel 5

We see Parco Delgado in the crowd, pointing towards the front of the hall. He has his hat off, and is not angry, just full of passion.

PARCO: ...WHOSE **OPTIONS** ARE SO **LIMITED**?

PARCO: THIS CITY HAS THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE, **HUNDREDS** OF TRIBAL AND LOCAL GROUPS, AND STILL THE **BEST** WE CAN GIVE THEM IS A CHOICE BETWEEN THE **SAME TWO PARTIES?**

Page 14

Panel 1

Cut to Matty. The guy next to him is again whispering to him.

GUY: That's **Parco Delgado**. Comes from uptown, some kind of populist sensation.

MATTY: I've heard of him...

Panel 2

On stage, show five of the men in this panel. The USA rep is speaking, and the Nation of Fearghus guy is standing and screaming and pointing towards Delgado.

USA: UH, EXCUSE ME—

NATION: **SHUT UP, DELGADO!** NO ONE **INVITED** YOU!

PARCO, off: THAT'S EXACTLY MY POINT!

Panel 3

Back to Parco, who is not losing his temper, but talking louder and gesturing bigger.

PARCO: HOW CAN THESE TALKS ULTIMATELY WORK WHEN THE DELEGATES ARE PICKED AND CHOSEN SO **SELECTIVELY**?

PARCO: AND THE **ELECTION?** THE CANDIDATES ARE **ALREADY CHOSEN**... IF A CEASEFIRE IS MEANT TO ALLOW US ALL A CHANCE TO PARTICIPATE, WHY CAN'T WE PUT FORWARD OUR **OWN** PEOPLE?

USA, off: MR. DELGADO, WE VALUE **ALL** INPUT. WE WERE HAPPY TO INVITE YOU DOWN HERE TODAY.

Panel 4

Cut to the USA guy, who is scowling in annoyance.

PARCO, off: YEAH... ON A ONE-DAY VISITORS PASS.

PARCO, off: **THANKS**, THAT'S MIGHTY **WHITE** OF YOU, MR. **REPRESENTATIVE** FROM THE **U.S. of A**.

Panel 5

The guy from the Nation is still standing and screaming. But we see that in the background. In the foreground is Matty, turning around in his chair to look at us, a big smile on his face. He liked what Parco just said.

NATION: YO, GET THE **FUCK UP HERE** AND SAY THAT!

Matty:
I GOTTA MEET THIS GUY.

Page 15

Panel 1

Switching scenes. We need another exterior of the Cooper Union building, but it can be smaller. Maybe from the air?

Panel 2

Parco and his guards are stopped at a military checkpoint, which is a temporary one – two Humvees parked sideways blocking a street. Parco is getting his pass checked by a surly US military guard. We see this from about 30 meters away.

VOICE, off: PARCO!

VOICE, off: MR. DELGADO!

Panel 3

Reverse around and look over Parco's shoulder at Matty, who is running towards him.

PARCO: HEY, ROTH.

PARCO: WHERE'S YOUR **ENTOURAGE?** I SAW YOU ROLL UP WITH THE TROOPS AND A LIBERTY NEWS HANDLER. NOT MUCH CHANGES IN TWO YEARS, DOES IT?

Panel 4

The surly soldier is jabbing his thumb, indicating the direction Parco should walk (which is between the two Humvees, the space serving as the "gate").

PARCO: THANKS.

PARCO: GIVE ROTH'S PASS A GOOD CHECK. I DUNNO IF HE'S ALLOWED THIS FAR OFF THE LEASH.

Panel 5

Show Matty, who's pissed off.

MATTY: WHAT'S YOUR FUCKING **PROBLEM?**

Panel 6

On the other side of the Humvees, Parco points back at Matty, each hand pointing like a gun.

PARCO: **YOU**, ROTH, ARE A **TOOL**.

Page 16

Panel 1

Get a silent panel of the whole scene – Parco and Matty staring at each other with anger from across the Humvees. Tense.

Panel 2

Then suddenly Parco and his guards start laughing, laughing big.

ALL: HAHAHAHAHA!

PARCO: AW, COME ON OVER HERE, YOU CREEP. I'M JUST KIDDING.

Panel 3

Matty passes through, smiling and embarrassed. The soldier mutters something to him as he passes, but Matty doesn't seem to have noticed.

SOLDIER: Watch this asshole, Roth...

PARCO, off: YOU'RE NOT A TOOL, ROTH. BUT **I DO** HAVE A LEGIT BONE TO PICK WITH YOU...

Panel 4

The two of them shaking hands.

PARCO: ...WHY DO YOU **NEVER** GO ABOVE 59^{th} STREET?

PARCO: OK, WELL, YOU **DID** DO A THING ON THE PARK GHOSTS, BUT THOSE MOTHERFUCKERS ARE **PSYCOPATHS**.

MATTY: IT'S **INPENETRABLE**, MAN.

Panel 5

Focus on Parco.

PARCO: IT'S JUST A **CITY**, MAN. **PEOPLE AND BUILDINGS**, THAT'S IT.

PARCO: IT'S JUST SCARY BECAUSE YOU DON'T KNOW IT. AND WE DON'T KNOW YOU. FUCK, YOU SHOULD SEE ME TRY AND WALK AROUND THE LOWER EAST SIDE WHERE YOU ARE – PEOPLE ARE **FUCKED UP**.

Panel 6

Pull back and show both of them. Parco has a hand on Matty's shoulder as they walk.

PARCO: LISTEN, I KNOW YOU WANNA TALK TO ME.

PARCO: BUT ONLY ON MY HOME TURF, OK?

Page 17

Riccardo, I couldn't gather much reference because of internet troubles, but its easy to find reference for this by searching on Flickr.com. Use words like "new york city" along with "harlem", "Washington heights" and "inwood".

Panel 1

Starting this new scene with a skyline shot of upper Manhattan, possibly with the George Washington Bridge. It's later afternoon, the sun starting to dip behind the buildings.

News:
"Good evening, this is Liberty News Up-To-The-Minute, with a news summary. As the sun begins to set on the eleventh day of the normalization talks, it seems the beleaguered city will be able to sleep on **good news** for a change."

Panel 2

Another scene of Harlem or Morningside Heights. Stick mostly to buildings and streets from a distance. In DMZ, this huge part of the city is barely populated, so no signs of people. And there will be less rubble and debris and destroyed cars and more overgrown grass and trees and wild animals – dogs, mostly.

"A **cease fire** is scheduled to go into effect at midnight tonight, with all the major players pledging to uphold the agreement. Through the strength of **hope** and **prayer** we'll wake up tomorrow to a peaceful "DMZ"."

Panel 3

Another similar type of scene, this time with a building in particular to focus on, a taller version of the Stuy Town apartments. It's getting darker now, the sun is setting, and in only two windows do we see some yellow light.

"In election news, the frontrunners today announced their intentions to visit New York City, to introduce themselves to the residents of the city, many of whom are no doubt excited to vote in an election for the first time since before hostilities broke out."

Panel 4

Show a man standing on a rooftop, silhouetted against the sunset. We can see his shape pretty well, and the fact he has an AK47 on a strap over one shoulder. He's smoking a cigarette.

"Experts predict the security surge will be extended to cover not only the normalization talks but also the areas the presidential hopefuls intend to visit. More on that at the top of the hour. Good evening."

Panel 5

Finally we get in close to one building and one row of windows with the lights on.

VOICE: YOU HEAR THAT SHIT?

Page 18

Panel 1

Inside that apartment, Parco and Matty are sitting on a couple of old, dingy sofas. They're facing each other and leaning forward with a narrow table between them. On that table is at least 12 empty cans of beer. They've been sitting and talking for hours and are pretty friendly by now.

The rest of the room is a standard apartment - bookshelves overflowing with books, a couple other chairs, a ratty TV, etc. Nothing looks expensive, just comfortable.

MATTY: WHAT SHIT?

PARCO: THE **NEWS**. THE ELECTION SHIT. ALL THIS TALK OF INCLUSION, BUT WHAT SAY DO WE REALLY HAVE?

MATTY: WON'T WE GET A PRIMARY VOTE?

PARCO: I DUNNO, **WILL** WE? EVEN IF WE **DO**, IF THEY FIGURE OUT HOW THE HELL THAT WORKS IN THE DMZ, IT'S MOSTLY SYMBOLIC. WHERE'S OUR REPRESENTATION?

Panel 2

Switch to Matty.

MATTY: THE DMZ NEEDS A CANDIDATE OF ITS OWN, YOU MEAN?

Panel 3

Switch to Parco, who is smiling and looking right at Matty while he chugs from his beer.

Panel 4

Back to Matty, who's pointing at finger at Parco. His reaction is a little bit exaggerated from all the alcohol.

MATTY: OH SHIT! **SHIT!**

MATTY: **YOU!** HOW THE HELL DO YOU PLAN ON DOING **THAT?**

Panel 5

Parco leans back, hands behind his head.

PARCO: I CAN NEITHER CONFIRM NOR DENY.

PARCO: WHAT TIME IS IT?

MATTY, off: A COUPLE MINUTES BEFORE MIDNIGHT. ALMOST CEASE-FIRE TIME.

Page 19

Panel 1

Parco's up and looking out the window. His back is to us.

PARCO: A LOT OF FRIENDS OF MINE FROM AROUND HERE ENDED UP IN THE MILITARY.

PARCO: A FEW DIED OVERSEAS SO SOME POOR, BELEAGURED FUCKS WITH PURPLE INK ON THEIR FINGERTIPS COULD ROCK THE VOTE.

Panel 2

Cut to Matty, who's sitting forward on the couch.

PARCO, off: AND NOW SOME ARMY ASSHOLE IS GOING TO TELL ME WHO I **CAN** AND **CAN'T** VOTE FOR.

MATTY: DID YOU SERVE?

Panel 3

Side view of Parco still looking out the window, drinking his beer.

PARCO: YEAH. I WAS ONE OF THE LUCKY ONES AND NEVER SAW COMBAT.

Panel 4

Pull back and show both of them in frame. Silent panel.

Panel 5

Small panel of Parco turning towards Matty, a small smile on his face.

PARCO: MIDNIGHT YET?

MATTY: JUST ABOUT.

Panel 6

He sits down next to Matty and starts dialing his phone.

PARCO: COOL, CHECK THIS.

Panel 7

Small panel of Parco smiling broadly and talking into his phone.

PARCO: **DO IT**. AND CALL ME BACK WITH THE VIDEO.

Page 20

Panel 1

Small panel of Matty looking at Parco with alarm. This can be inset into the next panel.

MATTY: DO **WHAT?**

Panel 2

This is a large panel of the Cooper Union building, light up with floodlights and surrounded by Humvees and sleepy guards. This should show the entire building, similar to the original establishing shot earlier in the issue.

Location cap:
THE COOPER UNION BUILDING.

A FEW SECONDS TO MIDNIGHT.

Panel 3

Show a portion of the top of the building, with the large slanted windows. An explosion is shooting out of one of those windows... it's a small explosion, like if one of those tiny Fiat cars blew up. ☺ It's exploding out in a jet glass and dust – no fire.

Also flying out of the explosion are hundreds of pieces of paper – postcards. We can't see what they are just yet.

sfx: **POOOOOM!**

Page 21

Panel 1

Low angle looking up at the explosion. Some of the soldiers are in panel either scanning in all directions with their rifles held to their faces, or yelling into their radios.

The postcards are filling the sky and starting to fall down towards the ground.

Panel 2

Cut back to Parco and Matty. Parco is holding his cellphone so the both of them can watch on the tiny screen.   They are both laughing, and Parco has one arm around Matty's shoulders like best buddies.

PARCO: **POOM!** COMPRESSED AIR AND FIVE THOUSAND FLYERS.

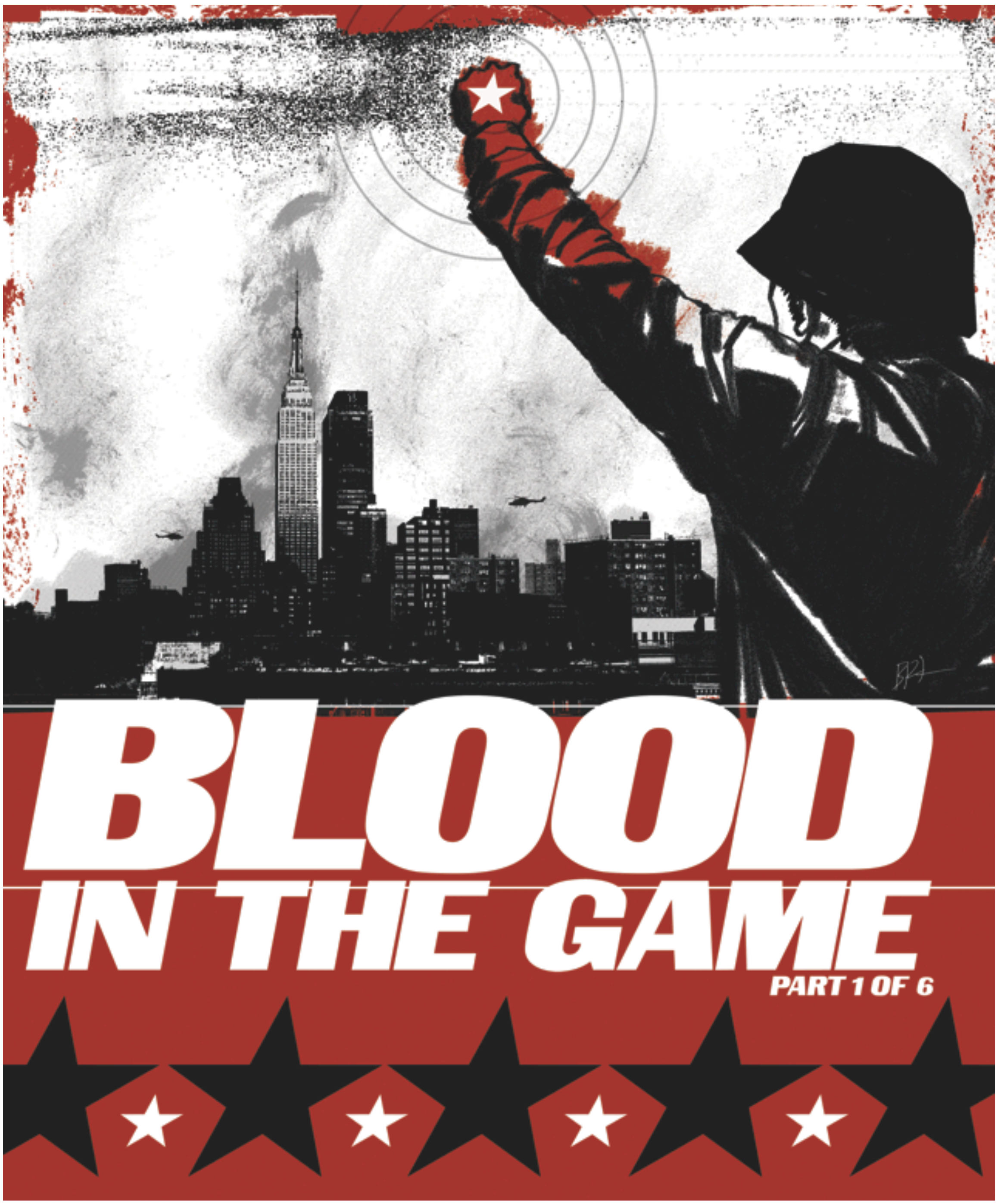
PARCO: I'D HEREBY LIKE TO ANNOUNCE MY **CANDIDACY FOR OFFICE**, MOTHERFUCKERS!

MATTY: **SHIT!**

Page 22

Panel 1

Full page splash of a pile of postcards lying on the street. One of them we see clearly, and its your version of the cover of this issue, Riccardo – Parco with the arm outstretched over the city, but instead of the title, the bottom of the postcard should read: DELGADO NATION in bold letters. The stars should be there too.



THE END.